

Australia

1. Per USCINCPACINST 6200.2, Commanders are responsible for an effective Force Health Protection Plan for personnel deploying to locations within the USCP AOR, ensuring implementation of the Plan, for appointing a FHP Officer and assistant who will serve as the Commander's focal point for the planning, coordination, and execution of "real world" force health protection planning for a specific deployment. This is applicable to all assigned and attached personnel, all Department of Defense personnel performing official duties within locations in the AOR, and all U.S. contractor personnel employed directly by the DOD in locations in the AOR.

2. FHP Planning must include the following elements:

a. Health Threat Assessment. This assessment must evaluate known and anticipated health threats/hazards (including endemic diseases, injuries, industrial toxins, and climatic extremes) and the appropriate countermeasures to be taken for each.

b. Health Record and Readiness Screening. Performed prior to deployment. Items identified for screening include: immunizations, HIV testing, TB skin testing, DNA sample on file, current physical exam, dental class I or II, prescription medications on hand, and unresolved health problems (i.e., P-4 profile, limited duty, pregnancy, mental health, etc.) which could disqualify the Service member for deployment.

c. Health Threat Briefing. Must be performed prior to deployment. Attendance must be documented. Minimum contents of a Health Threat Briefing for Australia include the following material:

(1) Immunizations.

(a) Personnel must be up to date on all routine immunizations for personnel on deployable or mobility status (tetanus booster, hep A, typhoid, influenza)

(b) Current influenza vaccine. EVEN IF LOCAL FLU SEASON IS PAST AND NEW VACCINE IS NOT AVAILABLE YET.

(c) Special immunizations are not required.

(2) Chemoprophylaxis. Malaria does not occur in Australia. Chemoprophylaxis is not required.

(3) Personal Protective Measures.

(a) Permethrin treatment of uniforms and bed nets before departure (preferably with permethrin concentrate/compressed air sprayer technique, which lasts the life of the uniform).

(b) DEET cream. Apply to exposed skin and spread out into a thin layer (avoiding eyes and mouth) twice a day and at night to minimize risk of Ross River Virus Fever and dengue.

(c) Sleep under a permethrin-treated bed net with the edges tucked in under the bedding all around.

(4) Safe Food and Water. Water, food, and ice are considered as safe in Australia as they are in the United States.

(5) Sexually transmitted diseases. STDs are found in every area in the world and can be serious or FATAL (e.g., HIV, gonorrhea, hepatitis B).

(a) Abstinence is the only perfectly safe practice and is recommended.

(b) barrier protection with latex condoms is the only other acceptable option (but can be just as dangerous in case of breakage).

(6) Motor Vehicle and General Safety.

(a) The greatest risk to health for travelers is motor vehicle accidents. Seat belts and extreme caution in and around vehicles must be practiced. All traffic travels on the left in Australia.

(b) General safety. Exercise caution in ALL activities to avoid injury of any type.

(7) Environmental Factors.

(a) Heat injury. Heat is a hazard in the northern and central parts of Australia. Heat injuries must be avoided. Necessary precautions include drinking water frequently, on a schedule, to avoid dehydration; adhering to safe work-rest cycles during extreme conditions; and careful observation of teammates to detect warning signs of heat injury such as mental status changes and cessation of sweating.

(b) Sun injury. Sun exposure can be intense. Wide-brimmed hats, long sleeves and trousers, and liberal use of SPF 15 or greater sunscreen are recommended precautions.

(c) Environmental and industrial pollution. Urban and regional air pollution is Australia's greatest environmental threat. Industry, power generation and motor vehicles release pollutants that may lead to photochemical smog, haze, and acidification. Power stations and metal smelters emitting sulfur dioxide are the main air polluters outside cities. Australia's marine and coastal environment is polluted by soil erosion, fertilizers, intensive animal production, sewage and other urban and industrial discharges.

(8) Hazardous Plants and Animals.

(a) Rabies. Rabies does not occur in Australia. However, bats in Australia have been found to harbor a virus related to rabies virus and should be avoided.

(b) Snakes. There are numerous poisonous snakes in Australia. It is important to avoid all interactions with snakes, as some have extremely toxic venoms and antivenin may not be readily available. If someone is bitten, have them lie down and rest quietly, bandage the affected part with a snug bulky dressing, and arrange for urgent medevac to a medical treatment facility. NO ONE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO KILL OR CATCH THE SNAKE.

(c) Marine life. Sharks may be present in coastal waters. Corals and jellyfish may provide a hazard, especially in northern Australia. During the period November through March, deadly box jellyfish (*Chironex fleckeri*) may be encountered in the warm tropical seas. Crocodiles (fresh water and salt water) of up to 16 feet (5 meters) exist in the tropical rivers and coastal estuaries of much of northern Australia.

(9) Personal Health and Fitness. Try as much as possible to maintain a healthful regimen of hygiene and fitness. Regular bathing, hand washing, and frequent changes of undergarments, including socks, are important. When exercising outdoors, be aware that shorts and tank tops will make you more susceptible to sunburn.

(10) Other comments. Australia is a highly developed, stable parliamentary democracy which recognizes the British monarch as

sovereign. Obtain the latest State Department advisory and Consular Information Sheet prior to travel (available at <http://travel.state.gov>).

3. Assistance with Health Threat Assessments, Health Threat Briefings, and countermeasures planning can be obtained from the following sources:

a. Preventive Medicine Department, Tripler Army Medical Center, phone (DSN or 808)433-6693

b. Pacific Air Forces Public Health Officer, Hickam Air Force Base, phone (DSN or 808)449-2332, x269

c. Epidemiology Department, Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit 6, phone (DSN or 808) 473-0555.